

HEALTH

18 MAY 1961

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**TORRINGTON
RURAL DISTRICT
1960.**

REPORTS

OF THE

**MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
AND
PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR**



**FOR THE YEAR ENDING
31ST DECEMBER, 1960.**

GREAT TORRINGTON:

Printed by COPP & SON, "Osborne Printing Works,"

4 Well Street.

STAFF.

PART TIME OFFICER:

Medical Officer of Health—

Dr. E. H. WALKER, M.B., B.S., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

WHOLE TIME OFFICERS:

Chief Public Health Inspector and Surveyor—

F. G. GANE, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

Additional Public Health Inspector—

C. A. KERSWILL, Cert. S.I.E.J.B.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
COUNCIL CHAMBERS,
TORRINGTON.

*To the Chairman and Members of the Torrington
Rural District Council.*

GENTLEMEN,

We have pleasure in presenting our ANNUAL REPORTS
for the year ended 31st December, 1960.

We are, Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

E. H. WALKER, M.B., B.S., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,

Medical Officer of Health.

F. G. GANE, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.,

Public Health Inspector and Surveyor.

Torrington Rural District.

❖ 1960 ❖

General Statistics.

Area (Acres)...	...	...	...	...	...	...	79,803
Population (R.G.)	...	...	...	...	...	...	7,130
Number of Inhabited Houses	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,398
Rateable Value	..	...	...	...	...	...	£38,640
Sum realised by a Penny Rate	...	...	...	...	...	...	£165

Extracts from Vital Statistics of the Year.

Live Births Male 13, Female 15, Total 28.
(75 others were born outside the area).

Birth Rate per 1000 of estimated population ... 3.9

Deaths Male 28, Female, 20 Total 48.

Death Rate per 1000 of estimated Resident Population 6.7.

(Many others died in Hospitals outside the area).

Annual Report of Medical Officer of Health.

General Sanitary Conditions of the District.

Nursing.

The District is provided with Midwives and Nurses under the National Health Scheme.

Hospitals.

The District is accommodated by the Hospitals at Torrington, Bideford, Barnstaple and Exeter which are administered by a local Regional Board. These are not nearly large enough for modern conditions, and are becoming progressively worse as regards beds as the population increases.

Clinics.

These work efficiently through the County Council and other authorities.

Isolation Hospitals.

The majority of our patients are received by the Bideford Isolation Hospital. Special facilities are made for smallpox, etc.

Tuberculosis is admirably looked after by the Barnstaple Clinic and the disease is declining in numbers.

Ambulance Services.

These are satisfactory.

Laboratory Services.

These are available and function well, mostly at Exeter and Barnstaple.

Maternity Services.

These are provided by Midwives and Hospitals. Baby Clinics are very popular. I suggest that normal cases should be encouraged to use the Home Service available as a larger grant is now made for such cases, and so make more accommodation for others. This would also permit some patients to make plans to their own liking.

Schools.

These are improving as regards health, water and sanitation.

Most children wear broad shoes until in their early teens.

The deformities and defects in their feet after this age cannot be too strongly stressed owing to unsuitably shaped shoes—they can cause trouble for life as well as unnecessary expense to the National Health Service. It is perfectly possible to buy a nice looking wider type of shoe with a lower heel.

Dairies and Cowsheds.

These are definitely improving. A very few cases of mastitis among cattle have been reported.

Venereal Disease.

There is very little, and what there is, is imported from greater wage earning centres. There is an excellent clinic at Barnstaple.

Infestation.

This is very small amongst locals and the school nurses stop it quickly.

Housing.

There are many houses not up to standard. It is hoped that persons in these houses will be put into Council Houses. The dilapidated houses could then be reconditioned before being allowed to be tenanted again. Repairs of older houses is a major problem. Possibly more much smaller Council Houses should be built for the old persons and smaller families. They should be built where main water and electricity are or will be shortly available and preferably in villages rather than remote spots.

Many more two or three roomed houses are necessary for the elderly, so making room for the younger.

Fixed caravans cannot be considered suitable as dwellings where wet, sanitation and children are concerned, although mobile ones for short holidays may be useful to those who like them, provided they take their litter home.

Mental Health and Deficiencies.

The County looks after this very conscientiously, and also the deaf mutes and blind.

Water.

It is quite impossible for the area to be adequately supplied with wells and private reservoirs but the improvement in supply is increasing. Some villages have got main water and others will as soon as possible. In these days of shippens, indoor lavatories, baths, modern schools, washing such things as milk bottles and clothes more often, all the area should be supplied by the North Devon Water Board.

Drainage.

This is rather inadequate as a whole, but villages are being provided with main drainage as funds allow.

Immunisation against Diphtheria, etc.

The results are very satisfactory. Immunisation must be kept up to date. Immunisation against whooping cough and poliomyelitis will be available. The value of smallpox vaccination is not fully appreciated.

It is very necessary to keep up the Diphtheria immunisation.

Infectious Diseases.

During the year the following were reported:—

Whooping Cough	0 cases.	Tuberculosis	2 cases.
Scarlet Fever	0 cases.	Measles	0 cases.
Pneumonia	0 cases.	Dysentery	2 cases.
Erysipelas	0 cases.	Diphtheria	0 cases.
Smallpox	0 cases.	Poliomyelitis	0 cases.
Food Poisoning	4 cases.		

Annual Report of Public Health Inspector.

DETAILS OF INSPECTIONS.

Dwellings inspected under Housing Acts	...	...	41
Dwellings inspected under Public Health Acts	...	...	21
Re-inspections under Housing Acts	...	...	61
Re-inspections under Public Health Acts	...	...	20
Keeping of Animals	...	...	11
Offensive accumulations	...	...	7
Inquiries into cases of Infectious Disease	...	...	—
Number of Rooms disinfected	...	...	—
Visits to Factories	...	...	25
„ „ Bakehouses	...	...	6
„ „ Schools	...	...	4
Food Inspections (other than meat)	...	...	2
Visits to Food Preparing Premises (other than meat)			11
Number of Water Samples	...	...	6
Building Inspections under Bye-laws	...	...	180
Visits to Council Housing Sites	...	...	162
Defective Drains	...	...	54
Drains examined	...	...	91
Plans investigated	...	...	122
Petroleum inspections	...	...	18
Dirty Houses	...	...	4
Farm Water Supplies	...	...	6
Miscellaneous	...	...	37
Sewage Works	...	...	206
Improvement Grants	...	...	174

FACTORIES ACT, 1937 and 1948.

1—INSPECTIONS for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Public Health Inspectors)

Premises (1)	M/c line No. (2)	Number on Register (3)	Number of			M/c line No. (7)
			Inspections (4)	Written notices (5)	Occupiers prosecuted (6)	
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities ..	1	47	19	—	—	1
(ii) Factories not included in (i) to which Section 7 applies						
(a) Subject to the Local Authorities (Transfer of Enforcement Order, 1938†)	2	—	—	—	—	2
(b) Others... ..	3	—	—	—	—	3
(iii) Other premises under the Act‡ (excluding outworkers' premises)	4	—	—	—	—	4
TOTAL		47	19	NIL	NIL	

6

2—CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND

Particulars	M/c line No.	Number of cases in which defects were found			Number of cases in which prosecutions were	M/c line No.
		Found	Remedied	Referred To H.M. Inspector		
				By H.M. Inspector		

HOUSING.

1. Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the year:

(1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects	...	...	...	41
(2) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	...	...	3
(3) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	...	...	...	27

2. Remedy of Defects during the year without service of formal Notices:—

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action	22
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3. Action under Statutory Powers during the year:

A. Proceedings under Public Health Acts:

Number of dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the local Authority	21
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	----

Improvements carried out and nuisances abated:—

<i>External</i>						<i>No. of Premises</i>
Walls repaired	...	...	...	...	...	20
Roofs repaired	...	...	...	...	...	19
Guttering repaired	...	...	...	...	...	19
Downspouts repaired	...	...	...	...	...	19
Chimneys repaired	...	...	...	...	...	10
Water supply laid on into houses	...	...	...	...	...	28
New pumps provided	...	...	...	...	...	1
Wells cleansed	...	...	...	...	...	1
Well steinings repaired	...	...	...	...	...	1
New lengths drain laid	...	...	...	...	...	62
Defective drains repaired	...	...	...	...	...	17
New inspection chambers	...	...	...	...	...	19
Septic tanks repaired	...	...	...	...	...	6
New septic tanks	...	...	...	...	...	22
New gullies	...	...	...	...	...	19
New W.C.'s	...	...	...	...	...	31
Water supply laid on to W.C.'s	...	...	...	...	...	36
W.C. cisterns renewed	...	...	...	...	...	7
New washing accommodation	...	...	...	...	...	3
Outbuildings repaired	...	...	...	...	...	4

<i>Internal</i>						<i>No. of Premises</i>
Walls replastered	...	...	...	...	...	11
Ceilings replastered	...	...	...	...	..	12
Windows repaired	...	...	...	...	...	17
Doors repaired...	...	...	...	...	...	8
Floors repaired	...	...	...	...	...	11
Cooking appliances repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	...	15
New sinks	...	...	...	...	...	6
New sculleries	...	...	...	...	...	—
Baths installed	..	...	...	...	...	21
Food storage improved	...	...	...	...	...	17
Stairs repaired	...	...	...	...	...	6
Hot water systems fixed	...	...	...	...	...	15

New Housing Accommodation.

Number of new houses erected by local authority	...	8
„ „ new houses erected by private enterprise		8

Council Housing Programme.

During the year 2 one bedroom bungalows were erected at Winkleigh, 4 at Ashreigney and 2 at Weare Giffard. More one bedroom bungalows are contemplated during 1961 and some two bedroom bungalows. The Council now has 162 houses and bungalows.

25 Improvement Grants were made during the year totalling £9,062. This brings the total number of grants made by the Council to 144 covering an amount of £41,827. In addition, 56 standard grants totalling £5,708 have been paid. The annual amount allocated for grants by the Council to cover loan charges and repayments of principal is limited to the product of a twopenny rate. The Council's record in this respect compares very favourably with other rural districts.

CARAVANS.

There are no proper caravan sites. Caravanning is confined to 5 individually sited caravans used for residential purposes.

REFUSE DISPOSAL.

A fortnightly collection of refuse is now carried out by contract and is disposed of at three refuse tips, situated at Winkleigh, Merton and Roborough. The Council is planning to purchase and run its own vehicle in 1961.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

The villages of Winkleigh, Shebbear, Sheepwash, Taddiport, St. Giles-in-the-Wood, Kingscott and Roborough are served by modern

disposal plants. Schemes for Merton and Petrockstowe are approaching completion. Outline plans have been prepared for Yarnscombe, Ashreigney, Stibb Cross, Little Torrington and Weare Giffard, and except for the latter, are due to start in 1961.

WATER SUPPLIES.

This area is now very well served by a network of mains and all villages and hamlets are supplied.

The following new connections were made during the year:—

51—Domestic

84—Trade

The total number of premises now connected to the mains is 1065 domestic and 584 trade, of which 429 are farmhouses.

RODENT DESTRUCTION.

In connection with Torrington Borough Council a full time Operator is shared by the two authorities.

The following work was carried out in the Rural District during the year:—

Number of Survey calls made:—

Private Houses	...	...	1522
Refuse Tips and Sewage Works	...	...	43
Farms	...	...	209
Business Premises	...	...	74

Number of Premises treated:—

Private Houses	...	...	237
Refuse Tips and Sewage Works	...	...	13
Farms	...	...	58
Business Premises	..	...	5

OFFENSIVE TRADES.

There are no offensive trades in this district.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Slaughtering.

There are two licensed slaughter houses in the district including an abattoir at Winkleigh. 100% meat inspection is at present carried out but with some difficulty owing to irregular hours of slaughtering and week-end killing. Owing to continuous pressure on staff of other duties it may not always be possible to maintain this standard of inspection particularly during illness or holiday periods.

TABLE A.**Carcases and Offal inspected and condemned in whole or in part.**

Figures in Brackets are for 1959.

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep Lambs and Goats	Pigs	Hor- ses
Number killed (if known)	1239 (457)	378 (71)	2420 (148)	51213 (41805)	8753 (13233)	—
Number inspected	1239 (457)	378 (71)	2420 (148)	51213 (41805)	8753 (13233)	—
All Diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci						
Whole carcasses con- demned	7 (7)	5 (1)	14 (7)	170 (318)	63 (31)	— (—)
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	193 (142)	100 (—)	1 (—)	1743 (2692)	238 (814)	— (—)
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tub- erculosis and Cysticerci	16.1 (31)	27.7 (—)	.5 (—)	3.7 (6.4)	3.4 (6.2)	— (—)
Tuberculosis only						
Whole carcasses con- demned	— (1)	1 (—)	— (—)	— (—)	4 (4)	— (—)
Carcases of which some part or organ was con- demned	1 (1)	1 (—)	— (—)	— (—)	138 (204)	— (—)
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis ... ..	.08 (.4)	.3 (—)	— (—)	— (—)	1.1 (1.6)	— (—)
Cysticercosis						
Carcases of which some part or organ was con- demned	3 (—)	— (—)	— (—)	— (—)	— (—)	— (—)
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigera- tion	3 (—)	— (—)	— (—)	— (—)	— (—)	— (—)
Generalised and totally condemned	—	—	—	—	—	—

TABLE B.

Summary of Meat condemnations with cause and weight.

Food Condemned	Weight in lbs.
Due to Tuberculosis :	
1 Cow Carcase and Organs	320
4 Pig Carcases and Organs	1210
Portions of 2 Bullocks	67
Portions of 138 Pigs	1324
	2921 lbs.
	<i>i.e.</i> 1 ton 6 cwts. 0 qrs. 9 lbs.
Due to diseases other than Tuberculosis :	
Carcases and Organs of 7 Oxen	2372
Carcases and Organs of 5 Cows	1863
Carcases and Organs of 14 Calves	427
Carcases and Organs of 63 Pigs	3582
Carcases and Organs of 170 Sheep	6207
Parts of 293 Oxen	3647
Parts of 238 Pigs	1066
Parts of 1743 Sheep	4804
Part of 1 Calf	10
	23878 lbs.
	<i>i.e.</i> 10 tons 13 cwts. 0 qrs. 13 lbs.

Condemned meat was disposed of through trade channels after staining with naphthalene green.

TABLE C.

Other Foodstuffs.

NIL.

FOOD PREMISES.

The following is a list of food premises in the district:—

Grocery and General Stores	...	...	37
Bakers	...	...	3
Butchers	...	...	5
Fishmongers	...	...	1
Public Houses	...	...	15
Other Hotels and Cafés	...	...	2

63

Seventeen Premises are registered under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955, for the sale of pre-packed ice-cream and two for the manufacture and sale of fish and chips. No ice-cream is manufactured in the district. 11 visits to food premises were made during the year.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT.

There are two registered swill boiling plants in the district.

PETROLEUM LICENCES.

34 petroleum storage licences were issued during the year.

SLAUGHTERING LICENCES.

10 licences were issued during the year to slaughterman.

PLANS.

122 plans were submitted during the year, 117 were approved and 5 disapproved.

All plans were considered by the Council's Planning Committee before submission to the Divisional Planning Committee of the Devon County Council.

I attended the monthly meetings of the Divisional Planning Committee.

STAFF.

Again I would like to pay tribute to Mr. Kerswill for the conscientious way in which he has carried out meat inspection, sometimes under trying conditions. I would also like to thank your Clerk, Mr. B. W. Leatt, for his close co-operation and assistance at all times.



